

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 24 | Min 18 | Humidity 72%

Partly Cloudy

Sensex 71,483 | Nifty 21,456 | Gold 62,077 | Silver 74,415 | Dollar 83.04 | Euro 91.04 | GBP 105.37



Civic body floats tenders to revive Indira Canteens with renewed focus on quality food, hygiene

THOUGHT FOR FOOD

'Tenders in 4 packages; Rs 100 cr budget allocation'

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

With a focus on quality and hygiene, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike has begun re-tendering for all Indira Canteens in all zones. The Palike wants to hire contractors who will be able to provide food of standard quality as per the new menu.

The BBMP has floated tenders for Yelahanka and East zone at a cost of Rs 35.92 crore, and Rs 29.23 crore for the south zone for a period of two years.

To enable equal revenue for all contractors, zones will be clubbed and tenders will be issued in four packages for eight zones.

"We are planning to re-tender catering services for all zones. The tenders would be issued in four packages. The previous contract was renewed multiple times; we need to call a fresh tender. The current contractors will also be able to participate in the tender process competitively and transparently," said a senior official from BBMP health department.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>



"The menu has changed; we want to deliver quality food to the people"

— Senior official, health dept, BBMP

Stature of statues

Residents against local MLA for allegedly pressurising BBMP to demolish statue platform



Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's statue awaiting unveiling on Jayanagar 4th Block 18th Main near Shanti Upahar Hotel

I Y Maheswara Reddy
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Residents of Jayanagar 4th block staged a dharna on Sunday protesting against the demolition of a platform being readied for the installation of former president Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's statue that was to be unveiled on January 1, 2024.

The residents came together against local MLA CK Ramamurthy for allegedly pressurising the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) authorities to demolish the platform under construction.

They said the MLA is biased and oblivious about the platforms under construction for unveiling statues at other locations of Jayanagar.

"The demolition of the platform is nothing but political vendetta and communal politics. We have decided to install Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's statue during a meeting. I do not know how the installation of the statue will affect the pedestrians or the beauty of the city and whether it will incur a loss to the BBMP," said Ahmed Khan, a resident.

The residents have questioned the BBMP on why they failed to take similar action against the platforms being constructed for installation of statues near Shanti Upahar on 18th Main and on 14th Main of Jayanagar 3rd Block.

"What is wrong if we install Dr APJ

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

3 THINGS TO DO



01 Circus marvel

Step into the world of wonder with Rambo Circus, a thrilling spectacle of acrobats, clowns, and daredevils! Don't miss the excitement under the big top. When- Dec 21, 2023 to Jan 2, 2024
Where- St Johns Auditorium

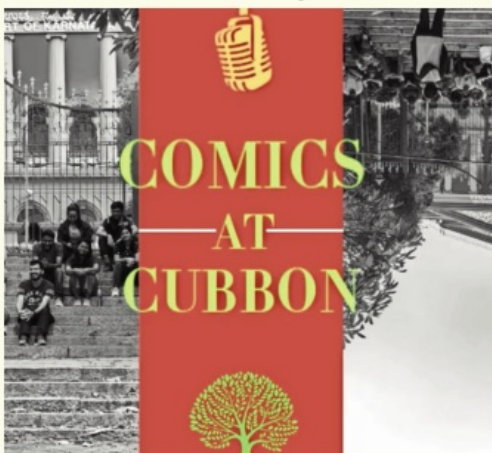


02 Grand expo

Discover a grand showcase of culture, art, and innovation at Mehfil 02. Immerse yourself in a diverse range of exhibits, performances, and experiences. An event not to be missed!
When- Dec 24 - Dec 25;
Where- Jayamahar Palace Hotel

03 Laughs galore

Get ready for a laughter-filled evening at Cubbon Park, as top-notch comedians take the stage to tickle your funny bone. Don't miss the hilarity and good vibes! When- 24 Dec - 30 Dec
Where- Outside Karnataka High Court



Gears shift to lift minds

Rotary International and Karnataka Vintage & Classic Car Club organised a vintage rally at Vidhana Soudha to raise mental health awareness, with over 25 classics from 1935 to 1974 participating in the rally.

No need to worry about new Covid-19 variant: Experts

Embrace safety: Mask up, caution always key to prevent new wave

Sridhar Vivan
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As Bengalureans geared up for New Year celebrations in 2022, after two years of grappling with the Covid-19 pandemic, unexpected news of a surge in Covid-19 cases, particularly linked to the Omicron sub-variant BF.7, emerged from China. This development forced the Karnataka government to swiftly issue new guidelines for New Year parties.

However, since then, there have been no waves, except for a few blips, and Covid-19 has been on the back burner. Now, as the city gears up for year-end travel and parties in 2023, another Covid-19 shocker hits due to a spike in cases in Kerala. This has compelled the Karnataka

categorise a strain as a variant of concern, we evaluate three key parameters such as the rate of transmission, immune evasion, and propensity to cause severe disease. While there's some indication of slightly increased transmissibility and preliminary evidence of potential vaccine evasion, reassuringly, there's no significant rise in severe cases. This underscores the importance of ongoing vigilance."

He also added that similar to vaccination strategies against seasonal flu, adapting booster vaccines tailored to emerging variants becomes crucial. "Community measures align with current practices: vigilance for symptoms, adherence to preventive measures like mask-wearing and distancing, and targeted protection for vulnerable populations. This proactive approach aims to curb transmission and

“While a few cases of the new variant have been identified in Kerala, it currently poses no significant concern in Karnataka

— Dr Satyanarayana Mysore, HOD and Consultant, Manipal Hospital

Health Department to call for an experts' meeting on Tuesday. Meanwhile, experts say that the new variant may not lead to another wave, although individuals need to be careful as always.

Dr John Paul M, a Consultant in Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease at SPARSH Hospital, stated, "The current JN.1 variant, stemming from the Omicron lineage, exhibits minor mutations leading to sub-variants. To

mitigate potential challenges posed by evolving viral strains, ensuring a strategic and effective response to emerging health threats," the doctor said.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday said, "I have told the Health Minister to hold a meeting regarding the spread of new variants." Adding to this, Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao said, "We are constantly in touch with



Collective efforts, masks, hand hygiene necessary to prevent outbreak, avert surge in cases Karnataka

the Union Health Ministry and experts. I have asked hospitals, both private and government, to conduct Covid-19 tests for those patients coming in with complaints of Influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI)." Dr Satyanarayana Mysore (HOD and Consultant - Pulmonology Lung Transplant Physician, Manipal Hospital Old Airport Road) said, "The prevalence of respiratory infections, including RSV, adenovirus, H1N1, and other minor viruses, are notable, with repeated negative Covid-19 swab results. While a few cases of the new Covid-19 variant have been identified in Kerala, it currently poses no significant concern in Karnataka."

He also explained that col-

lective efforts are essential to prevent a potential outbreak and to avert another pandemic, the proven methods of wearing masks and practising hand hygiene must be emphasised. These simple measures can effectively prevent a surge in Karnataka.

"Vaccination is currently prioritised for the high-risk group and the unvaccinated, but the emergence of variants that can evade immunity remains a challenge. Encouragingly, the clinical profile of patients with the new variant appears to be similar to a flu-like illness, providing some reassurance. The key focus at the moment should be on adhering to Covid-19-appropriate behaviour, and there is no need for panic," Dr Satyanarayana added.



Will savings account interest rate rise after RBI's push? Chances are bright

Gone are the days when bank account holders earned 4% interest rate even on the smallest amount kept in their savings accounts. Many large prominent banks are now offering much lower savings account interest rates in the range of 2.70% to 3% on the lowest deposit base. However, the interest rate on the post office savings account has remained unchanged at 4%. Bank retail depositors have been forced to be contained with a lower return on their savings account balance.

However, the situation is likely to change for the better for small depositors as the issue has come to the notice of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The central bank has been pushing banks to raise their interest rates on saving accounts.

A research report from Emkay Global Financial Services highlighted that saving account rates have been largely stagnant and lower, at less than 4% for around 75% of the saving deposit pool despite a 250 bps increase in repo



rate and higher Consumer Price Inflation (CPI). It is worthwhile to note that a few banks such as SBI have linked their savings account interest rates to the repo rate. This has possibly attracted the attention of the RBI, leading to recent statements by the regulator that the near-stagnant/lower savings account rate does not lead to effective policy transmission (repo increased by 250 bps) and, thus,

banks should consider raising it.

A news report by Reuters published on October 25, 2023 indicated that the RBI was already nudging banks at meetings to raise savings deposit rates and the central bank might need to push them again if required. And now that the central bank has followed it up in its upcoming Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on December 8, retail depositors are likely to get a

“We believe that instead of openly directing banks to increase SA deposit rates and sending inaccurate signals to the market, an RBI nudge could come via asking banks to effectively link SA deposit rates to repo or other benchmark rates

higher return on their small deposits.

Few banks offer higher rates but not the large banks

The Emkay report says that many banks with relatively sub-optimal liability franchises increased their savings account rates (for example Yes Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank) post the savings account de-regulation in 2011, to catch up with large peers. Even new-age banks being later

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RATE OF INTEREST
10% to 12%
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entrants, including SFBs (Ujjivan, Equitas and AU) and universal banks (IDFCB, Bandhan and RBL), offered higher savings account rates to mobilise these deposits. However, this was limited and most of the large banks have been offering a lower rate.

RBI is likely to continue pushing banks to raise their saving deposit rates

With the RBI's MPC meeting of December 8 keeping the repo rate unchanged, many see this as the central bank nudging banks to raise their interest rates on saving bank accounts. "We believe that instead of openly directing banks to increase SA deposit rates and sending inaccurate signals to the market, an RBI nudge could come via asking banks to effectively link SA deposit rates to repo or other benchmark rates," says the Emkay report.

However, it looks unlikely that the RBI would go for re-regulation of the interest rate on saving accounts. "RBI may opt for softly prodding banks, instead of re-regulating the SA rate via any official directive," suggests the Emkay report.

By Naveen Kumar, ET Online



7.8% na milega dobara!

FIXED DEPOSITS at 7.8%* interest p.a. for senior citizens.

Green signal for smart signals in city, finally?

DULT gets moving with MODERATO project; integrates traffic signals, variable message signs, Traffic Information Centre, enhancing urban mobility under multi-year contract

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After months of inactivity, there is some progress on the MODERATO (Management of Origin-Destination Related Adaptation for Traffic Optimisation) technology signal project by the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT). As DULT engages in last-minute work, they estimate launching the signals by March 2024.

The Japanese-based adaptive signal system, MODERATO-based Advanced Traffic Information and Management System (ATIMS) is likely to be launched by March 2024. DULT officials are completing the final works before the scheduled launch of the signals next year. Recently, DULT, handling the project, issued a short-term tender for electric connectivity for a queue length management system, variable message signs, and automatic traffic classified counter at the locations chosen by DULT, at the cost of Rs 1,72,47,477. Another short-term tender was issued for providing an internet lease line and broadband connectivity for the Advanced Traffic Information and Management System (ATIMS).

The ATIMS project, named MOD-

ERATO in Bengaluru City, involves the implementation of traffic signals at 28 locations, variable message signs at 3 locations, and the establishment of the Bengaluru Traffic Information Centre (B-TIC) along with other data acquisition systems. The traffic signals and variable message signs will be operated by the Bengaluru Traffic Police, while the B-TIC and all project servers located at the BESCOM data centre (at HSR layout) will be operated by the DULT. The contract will be for 1 year and can be extended annually for 5 years.

The project involves the imple-

As part of the project, special traffic signals will be implemented at 28 locations, along with 3 Variable Message Sign (VMS) boards

mentation of an advanced smart signalling system and the establishment of a traffic analytic centre (Bengaluru Traffic Information Centre) using real-time data gathered from probes (BMTC GPS) and other automatic data collection systems. The data collected from various on-ground devices will be analysed and



Japanese MODERATO-based ATIMS all set to launch in Karnataka by March 2024

disseminated to road users and other stakeholders, including the Bengaluru Traffic Police, BBMP, etc.

As part of the project, special traffic signals will be implemented at 28 locations, along with 3 Variable Message Sign (VMS) boards.

Traffic signals and Variable Message Sign (VMS) boards have been proposed at 28 locations, including Queens Statue Circle Junction, Anil Kumble Circle Junction, Arts & Craft Circle Junction, Mayo Hall Junction, Webbs' Circle Junction, Trinity Circle Junction, Trinity Church Road, Begum Mahal Junction, Manipal Centre Junction, Kamaraj Road Junction, Shivaji Nagar Intersection Junction,

tion, OPERA Junction, Ashirvadam Junction, Old Police Station Junction, Ashok Nagar Junction (Shoolay Circle), Mother Theresa Junction, D'Souza Circle Junction, Kensington Oval Junction, Tamari Kannan Junction, Anjaneya Temple Junction, Old Madras Road & Double Road Junction (Police Station Junction), Old Madras Road & Indiranagar 100ft Junction, CMH Road - Adarsh Theatre Junction, Swami Vivekananda Road-Cambridge Road-Bazaar Street Junction, Old Madras Road & Indiranagar 80 Ft. Rd. Junction, Garuda Mall Junction, Hosmat Junction, Old Madras Road, Hosur Road, and MG Road.

Helmets 4 Life: College students ride safe

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

A distinctive program was organised for Don Bosco College students in East Bengaluru, addressing a crucial issue often neglected by youth, making them vulnerable to road traffic fatalities. It was a unique programme as it addressed a very important issue that is being neglected by youth thus making them vulnerable to road traffic deaths. Don Bosco College organised Helmets 4 Life, a comprehensive training programme for two-wheeler riders within the campus premises. The initiative, in collaboration with Need Base India, an NGO dedicated to promoting road safety and helmet usage among young riders in colleges, aimed to instil a culture of safety on the road.

The programme, spearheaded by Fr Dr Shajan Noronha SDB, the Prin-

cipal of Don Bosco College, emphasised the crucial importance of wearing helmets. He said that the college is committed to fostering road safety awareness and cultivating a culture of adherence to traffic rules among students. "Our college is dedicated to prioritising road safety and encouraging students to use two-wheelers responsibly, always with helmets," said Dr Shajan Noronha.

He said that programmes like 'Helmets 4 Life' are a commitment to the community in nurturing responsible and safety-conscious young riders. "By partnering with Need Base India, the college takes a significant step towards creating a safer environment on the roads for the entire community," he said.

One of the highlights of the "Helmets 4 Life" program was the distribution of free helmets to each participant with a Learner's License (LL) or Driving License (DL), generously sponsored by Need Base India.



PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

This initiative aimed to ensure that students have access to essential safety gear, promoting responsible riding habits.

The training sessions were both interactive and educative, employing various strategies to drive the message home. Trainers utilised CCTV clippings of fatal accidents, creating awareness among students about the potential risks on the road. The sessions covered crucial aspects, including the correct way to wear helmets and other safety measures. "The CCTV clippings on

fatal accidents have made us realise the importance of wearing helmets while riding a two-wheeler. The programme was useful for me," said Umabharahi, a BCA student.

Sandya Anand of Need Base India has said that more than 7,500 helmets were distributed among the people who attended the awareness programmes. "Our target is below 35 years of age group. We have been organising awareness programmes since last June and reached out to 7,500 people to date," she said.

Appreciating the awareness programme, Maria Delphine, a 2nd-year B.Com student said the awareness programme has made her realise the danger of overtaking vehicles from the wrong side of the road. "I learnt to drive recently and used to overtake vehicles on the road from the wrong side. After watching the CCTV clips, I have realised the danger of overtaking vehicles from the wrong side," said Maria Delphine.

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Pavement encroachment
Sadananda Nagar



Footpaths along Sadananda Nagar 1st Main are encroached upon without any regard for pedestrians.

Tree strangle
Brunton Road



The trees are being choked by entangled wires.

Missing covers
Kempegowda Road



The drain covers have been removed along Second Avenue Kempegowda Road Extension.

Verily packed off to school? Crackdown against crowding

Traffic police inspect 362 vehicles, book cases against 128 for carrying more than permitted number of kids

PICTURE FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY



In South Bengaluru, 64 buses, 39 vans, and 18 cars were flagged for carrying too many kids

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

In a proactive move, the traffic police of Bengaluru's south division conducted a drive to crack down on school vehicles that carry more than the allowed number of passengers. Swift corrective actions were taken by the traffic police, with 362 vehicles inspected and 128 cases booked.

According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic), South, Shiva Prakash Devaraju, the drive was conducted in the entire division in which the highest number of violations were found in KS Layout, where 35 vehicles were searched and 25 of them had more than the allowed number of children.

Police data reveals that in South Bengaluru, 64 buses, 39 vans, and 18 cars were flagged for carrying too many children. Particularly alarming were instances in areas like Talgattapura, where half of the 50 buses inspected were found

Sometimes on an average students have to pay ₹4,000 for a commute within a 5-km radius. Parents also often tend to choose budget friendly vehicles

—D Shashi Kumar, KAMS

with more students than permitted. Similarly, in MICO Layout, 60 vehicles were checked, and 23 were found to be carrying more children than permitted.

ACP South traffic registered 74 cases, followed by ACP South East who registered 36 cases and 18 cases were booked by ACP HSR.

Contrastingly, in areas like Electronic City, where over 40 vehicles were inspected, only five buses were found violating rules concerning excess children. Similarly, in Bellandur, out of 30 vehicles checked, and only seven were in violation.

"Vehicles of schools situated in BTM layout, Tilaknagar, Bilekahalli were noticed violating the permissible limits and carrying excess children. There are some schools on Bannerghatta and Kanakapura Road which were also flagged," said the police.

D Shashi Kumar, general secretary, Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka (KAMS), notes that a majority of vehicles apprehended by the police for carrying excess children are privately owned, emphasising that they do not belong to the schools themselves.

"One can't simply blame a party, be it parents or schools, as most of these vehicles that I have seen carrying excess students are autos and vans that are run by private operators. Also, one has to keep in mind how expensive commuting is in the city, sometimes on an average students have to pay Rs 4,000 for a commute within a 5-km radius. Parents also often tend to choose vehicles that are budget friendly," he said.

Bike taxi ride leaves woman petrified

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

A 23-year-old was allegedly harassed by a bike taxi driver near Koramangala, close to Ejipura Signal on December 16.

The victim claims that while she was travelling from Tin Factory to Koramangala at around 8:30 pm, when the bike taxi driver touched her inappropriately despite her telling him to stop.

In a post on Reddit, the woman said that the driver first asked her to give her phone to put it on the map stand of his bike as his phone was not working.

The woman gave him her phone and then the driver started asking questions about her family and her life.

"After that, we stopped at a petrol pump for refill and after sitting he remembered that his key was below the backseat. He touched my thigh twice just to fetch that key. I was horrified and asked him to stop," she said.

Later, the man touched her inappropriately several times and the victim was too scared to do anything. "I was so scared. I couldn't even ask him what he was doing. It went for around 20 minutes till we reached a crowded area. I was mortified," she added.

The woman said that she didn't have the courage to stop him right away and continued to bear the harassment. "When we came to the Ejipura signal he touched me again but I didn't do anything thinking that my home is just 3 km away," she said.

The victim told BM that she contacted the customer service of the baxi taxi company but they were not helpful. "I asked them to remove the person from the app and send me his basic details. One of the customer support people said they had fired the driver. Their senior said they would do so. I asked for proof. They said they can't even give his bike number as it's confidential," the victim told BM.

She added that she doesn't want to file a police complaint as she lives alone and is scared to report the incident.

58ನೇ ವರ್ಷದ ಜನ್ಮದಿನದ ಶುಭಾಕಾಂಕ್ಷೆಗಳು

ನಮ್ಮ ಶ್ರೀ ಡಿ.ಕೆ.ಸುರೇಶ್ ರವರಿಗೆ

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367 bird hits reported in K'taka in 6 years

Officials attribute birds being attracted to area to dumping of waste on plots near airports

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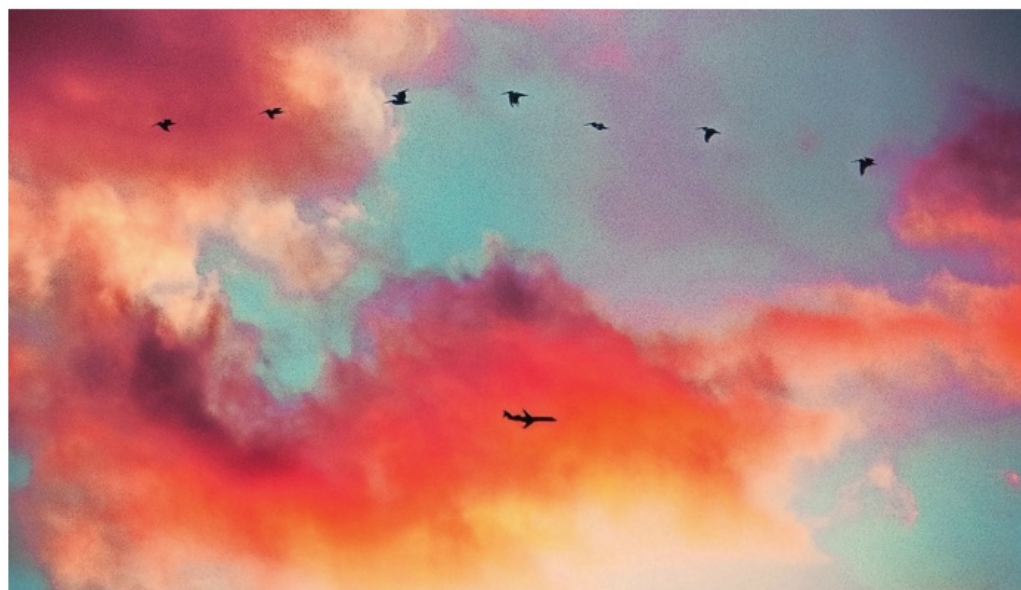
TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

How safe are our skies for fliers? Well, danger is always lurking for the aircraft in the form of bird hits. Karnataka has reported 367, one of the highest bird hits involving aircrafts in the last six years. In 2023 alone, 87 incidents were recorded (Delhi topped the list at 169).

The figures for Karnataka in previous years are 56 in 2018, 28 in 2019, 49 in 2020, 43 in 2021, and 104 in 2022. Officials blame the dumping of hazardous waste on the ground as one of the reasons for attracting birds.

Confirming this, Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation General VK Singh said the regulations and guidelines by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for managing potential wildlife hazards at licensed airports. Rule 91 of The Aircraft Rule 1937 prohibits activities like garbage dumping and animal slaughter within 10km of the Aerodrome Reference Point.

"Aerodrome Advisory Circular AD AC 06 of 2017 instructs aerodrome operators to implement effective wildlife control mechanisms to prevent strikes. Civil aviation requirement Section 4 Series B Part 1 mandates aerodrome operators to identify, manage, and mitigate wildlife-related risks by adopting measures to avoid collisions between wildlife and aircraft. Aerodrome Advisory Circular AD AC 01 of 2022 stressed for identifying gaps and ensuring the strict implementation of plans for wildlife hazard management both on and around the aerodrome. It calls for aerodrome operators to identify high-risk areas and take appropriate action to manage potential wild-



Advisory Circular instructs aerodrome operators to implement effective wildlife control measures

The advisory calls for aerodrome operators to identify high-risk areas and take appropriate action to manage potential wildlife hazards

General VK Singh, MoS

life hazards. The compliance with these regulations and guidance is monitored through annual surveillance inspections of the aerodrome," he said.

Status of airports

It may take over a year at least for work on the Hassan airport to get done. Minister for Heavy Industries and Infrastructure MB Patil said, "The first package of the Hassan airport is 63.40% over while the second phase is only 12.14% completed. We estimate

the Hassan airport completion by the financial year 2024-25."

Patil said that the Hassan airport was being constructed at a cost of Rs 193.65 crore at 536 acres. Hassan airport is being developed so that it can accommodate only ATR-72 flights.

Besides this, Karnataka may get six more airports as the aviation sector expands. The proposed airports are to come up at Vijayapura (Bijapur), Hassan, Raichur, Karwar, Koppal and Davanagere.

The proposed Vijayapura airport is located at Buranapura and Madhubavi villages, at a distance of 15 km from the city centre. The airport will come up at an area of 727 acres. The first phase of works started from February 2021 and the government hopes that the construction work will be completed by 2024. The Raichur airport will come up in an area of 320 acres at Yeganur village which is at a distance of 12 km from the City centre. An administrative

approval has been accorded for Rs 185.57 crore project. However, there is a requirement of an additional Rs 33 crore (Rs 20 crore for construction and Rs 13 crore for land acquisition and rehabilitation). Currently, the Indian Navy is constructing an airport at Seabird naval base which is at a distance of five kilometres from Ankola. The Karnataka government is proposing a tie up with the Navy to allow part of the airport as a civil enclave. For this purpose, 97.10 acre of land is under acquisition process. There is a plan to start airports at Davanagere and Koppal districts as announced in the 2022-23 budget. The Airports Authority of India has conducted a preliminary survey and the state government is yet to take a final call on the project.

Meanwhile, to promote tourism and for disaster management, new air strips are being developed across the State. An air strip has been planned in Dharmasthala.

'Won't be mute spectator to corruption'

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah asserted on Sunday that the government will not be a mute spectator in the face of corruption, stating that if any cases are found, an investigation will be conducted and action will be taken against the culprits.

The Chief Minister made this statement during the inauguration of the girl's Balamandira building in Gadag.

Responding to concerns about buses under repair in the KSRTC and allegations of bribery within the department, Siddaramaiah mentioned an ongoing investigation into the previous government's corruption cases.

He assured that action would be taken against those found guilty, including officials demanding bribes from drivers to allocate duties.

Addressing questions about the caste census report, Siddaramaiah emphasised that it is premature to label it unscientific before submission. He urged waiting for the report and criticised speculations without knowing its contents.

On project funding, Siddaramaiah dismissed claims of shortages, affirming that necessary funds are allocated.

The CM assured reimbursement for the Shakti Yojana expenses through KSRTC and emphasised the government's commitment to development work.

Highlighting financial achievements, the Chief Minister stated that his government had spent over Rs 73,928 crore on development, exceeding the previous administration's expenditure.

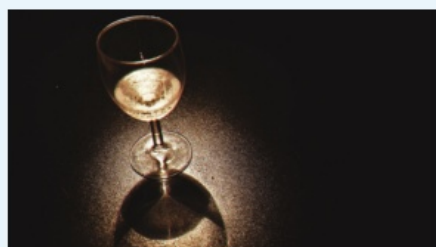
He emphasised the fulfilment of promises, with the fifth guarantee set to begin in January.

-ANI



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah inaugurated the girls' Balamandira building in Gadag

NOTES FROM THE FIELD



Lovers of liquor

Lately, there have been quite a few gatherings near Suvarna Soudha in Belagavi, and one of these shindigs was masterminded by the "beverage enthusiasts". Their main gripe? They're tired of being dubbed "drunkards" and want to be acknowledged as "liquor lovers" instead. When Minister Santosh Lad stepped into the scene to listen to their qualms, the "liquor lovers" were adamant about erasing the term "drunkard" from the vocabulary. Not stopping there, they threw in some extra demands—like setting up of a welfare fund for liquor lovers, providing VIP treatment for those with liver woes, position-

ing an ambulance right outside bars, and tossing in a cool Rs 10 lakh for those who party a bit too hard.

Glue chronicles

The recent Assembly session witnessed an unexpected twist when Speaker UT Khader expressed frustration with Kunigal MLA Dr. HD Ranganath. In a light-hearted yet cheeky moment, Khader surprised everyone by asking Ranganath about the best-quality glue available. Puzzled, Ranganath inquired about the reason behind the odd question. Khader's witty response? "I want to paste glue to your seat—strong enough to keep you seated at all times. Even if you manage to stand up, the seat should come along!"

Late entry

During the question hour, Speaker Khader raised an eyebrow at the tardiness of Basavana Bagewadi MLA Sharanu Salagar.

Apologising, Salagar explained his delay, citing a lack of private transportation in Belagavi. He revealed relying on hotel pickups and lamented that on the day, no one arrived on time to offer him a lift. His solution for next session? A plea for fellow legislators to give vehicles, ensuring punctuality.

Name game fiasco

Chikkamagaluru MLA HD Thammaiah created a ripple, expressing satisfaction with the answer but dissatisfaction with the name mentioned. Accusing officials of poor homework, he highlighted that his name, Thammaiah, was misspelled as Thimmaiah. Speaker Khader intervened, dismissing it as a possible typo and urging Thammaiah not to dwell on the name.

Black shirt rebellion

Channagiri MLA Basavaraju V Shivaganga stirred the pot when he arrived in a white

shirt but later returned wearing a black one. His reason? A silent protest against certain officials. However, Speaker Khader frowned upon this sartorial statement, deeming it inappropriate to don a black shirt during the session.

Political jump

Famous Kannada actor Shivaraj Kumar has steered clear of active politics, even though his wife had previously contested elections, with him actively campaigning for her. However, a recent offer has come his way. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar disclosed that he had discussions with Shivanna, attempting to persuade him to contest the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. Shivakumar stated, "Despite my request, Shivanna said that he has more than five movies in the pipeline, and he would contemplate the political leap only after fulfilling his cinema commitments. However, I reminded Shivanna that movies can wait, but the chance to enter politics shouldn't."

-Sridhar Vivan

Is Google's new AI model really better than ChatGPT? Expert weighs in

GEMINI GAZING

Google Deepmind has recently announced Gemini, its new AI model to compete with OpenAI's ChatGPT. While both models are examples of "generative AI", which learn to find patterns of input training information to generate new data (pictures, words or other media), ChatGPT is a large language model (LLM) which focuses on producing text.

In the same way that ChatGPT is a web app for conversations that is based on the neural network known as GPT (trained on huge amounts of text), Google has a conversational web app called Bard which was based on a model called LaMDA (trained on dialogue). But Google is now upgrading that based on Gemini.

What distinguishes Gemini from earlier models such as LaMDA is that it's a "multi-modal model". This means that it works directly with multiple modes of input and output: as well as supporting text input and output, it supports images, audio and video. Accordingly, a new acronym is emerging: LMM (large multimodal model), not to be confused with LLM.

In September, OpenAI announced a model called GPT-4Vision that can work with images, audio and text as well. However, it is not a fully multimodal model in the way that Gemini promises to be.

For example, while ChatGPT-4, which is powered by GPT-4V, can work with audio inputs and generate speech outputs, OpenAI has confirmed that this is done by converting speech to text on input using another deep learning model called Whisper. ChatGPT-4 also converts text to speech on output using a different model, meaning

Google's Gemini signals the emergence of a major competitor that will help to drive the field forward. Of course, OpenAI is almost certainly working on GPT-5, and we can expect that it will also be multimodal and will demonstrate remarkable new capabilities



that GPT-4V itself is working purely with text. Likewise, ChatGPT-4 can produce images, but it does so by generating text prompts that are passed to a separate deep learning model called Dall-E 2, which converts text into images.

In contrast, Google designed Gemini to be "natively multimodal". This means the core model directly handles a range of input types (audio, images, video and text) and can directly output them.

The verdict

The distinction between these approaches might seem academic, but it's important. The conclusion from Google's technical report and other qualitative tests to date is that the current publicly available version of Gemini, called Gemini 1.0 Pro, is not generally as good as GPT-4, and is more similar in its capabilities to GPT 3.5.

Google also announced a more powerful version of Gemini, called Gemini 1.0 Ultra, and presented some results showing that it is more powerful than GPT-4. However, it is difficult to assess this, for two reasons. The first reason is that Google has not released Ultra yet, so results cannot be independently validated at present.

The second reason why it's hard to assess Google's claims is that it chose to release a deceptive demonstration video. The video shows the Gemini model commenting interactively and fluidly on a live

video stream. However, as initially reported by Bloomberg, the demonstration in the video was not carried out in real time. For example, the model had learned some tasks beforehand, such as the three cup and ball trick, where Gemini tracks which cup the ball is under. To do this, it had been provided with a sequence of still images in which the presenter's hands are on the cups being swapped.

Promising future

Despite these issues, I believe that Gemini and large multimodal models are an extremely exciting step forward for generative AI. That's both because of their future capabilities, and for the competitive landscape of AI tools. GPT-4 was trained on about 500 billion words – essentially all good-quality, publicly available text.

The performance of deep learning models is generally driven by increasing model complexity and amount of training data. This has led to the question of how further improvements could be achieved, since we have almost run out of new training data for language models. However, multimodal models open up enormous new reserves of training data – in the form of images, audio and videos.

AI's such as Gemini, which can be directly trained on all of this data, are likely to have much greater capabilities going forward. For example, I would expect that mod-

els trained on video will develop sophisticated internal representations of what is called "naïve physics". I am also excited about what this means for the competitive landscape of AI. For the past year, despite the emergence of many generative AI models, OpenAI's GPT models have been dominant, demonstrating a level of performance that other models have not been able to approach.

Google's Gemini signals the emergence of a major competitor that will help to drive the field forward. Of course, OpenAI is almost certainly working on GPT-5, and we can expect that it will also be multimodal and will demonstrate remarkable new capabilities.

All that said, I am keen to see the emergence of large multimodal models that are open-source and non-commercial, which I hope are on the way in the coming years.

I also like some features of Gemini's implementation. For example, Google has announced a version called Gemini Nano, that is much more lightweight and capable of running directly on mobile phones. Lightweight models like this reduce the environmental impact of AI computing and have many benefits from a privacy perspective, and I am sure that this development will lead to competitors following suit.

(By Michael G Madden, University of Galway, The Conversation)

BITS & BYTES

SUE SOUP



A US-based news publisher has filed a class-action antitrust lawsuit against Google, alleging that the tech giant is "siphoning off" news publishers' content, their readers and ad revenue via its AI technologies.

The lawsuit, filed in Washington, DC, cited new AI tech like Google's Search Generative Experience (SGE) and Bard AI chatbot as worsening the problem, reports TechCrunch. The lawsuit filed by Arkansas-based publisher Helena World Chronicle, says Google's Bard AI was trained on a dataset that included "news, magazine, digital publications". **IAN**

STEALING AI



Microsoft-backed OpenAI has suspended Chinese internet giant ByteDance's account after a report said the TikTok's parent company is using OpenAI's technology to develop its own large language model (LLM) in the generative AI era. According to a report in The Verge, ByteDance documents confirmed the "OpenAI API has been relied on to develop its foundational LLM".

It was codenamed "Project Seed" during nearly every phase of development, including for training and evaluating the model, the report claimed. The conversations on Lark, ByteDance's internal communication platform for employees, showed how to "whitewash" the evidence through "data desensitisation". **IAN**

CLASS ACT



Apple has agreed to pay \$25 million to settle a class-action lawsuit over its Family Sharing feature.

The lawsuit, filed in 2019, alleged that "Apple misrepresented the ability to use its Family Sharing feature to share subscriptions to apps."

"A settlement has been reached with Apple in a class-action lawsuit, alleging that Apple misrepresented the ability to use its Family Sharing feature to share subscriptions to apps," according to the lawsuit.

Apple denied that it made any misleading misrepresentations and also denied all allegations of wrongdoing. **IAN**

Tipu Sultan or Krishnaraja Wadiyar? Mysuru airport naming debate heats up

The ruling Congress and BJP are confrontational following the proposal to name the Mysuru airport after Tipu Sultan. The BJP unit is opposing the proposal with full force and the issue is likely to take a communal turn in the state.

Minister for RDPR, IT, and BT Priyank Kharge made the proposal, and Congress MLA Prasad Abbaiah raised the issue in the winter session. Minister for Housing BZ Zameer Ahmad Khan and others supported the proposal.

Sources in Congress explain that the party wants to name Mysuru airport after Tipu to counter the BJP, which changed the name of the Tipu Express train to the Wadiyar Express. BJP also removed the title 'Mysuru Tiger,' believed to be given to Tipu Sultan, from the syllabus of textbooks. The BJP government, led by B.S. Yediyurappa had banned the celebration of Tipu Jayanthi in the state.

The Congress government, under the leadership of Chief



Minister Siddaramaiah, started the celebration of Tipu Jayanthi in Karnataka in 2015. Sources say that the Siddaramaiah government is seriously contemplating naming the Mysuru airport after Tipu Sultan in this backdrop.

However, Chief Minister

Siddaramaiah and DyCM DK Shivakumar are tight-lipped about the issue. Sources explain that they are contemplating because the BJP would use the issue to polarise Hindu votes in the state as the Lok Sabha elections are fast approaching.

IANs

What's the new menu at Indira Canteens?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

He added that Palike is looking at catering service providers who would be able to deliver quality food as per the new menu.

"The menu has changed; we want to deliver quality food to the people. The new service providers will be chosen by their ability to meet the technical and financial requirements. As per the menu change with local dishes, we will be choosing service providers," he added.

While the cost of the Indira Canteen meals remains Rs 5 for breakfast and Rs 10 for lunch/dinner, the suppliers will be asked to provide at the cost of Rs 62 for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

As per the new menu, Mangalore buns, bread and jam, idli with chutney and sambar, pulav, tomato baath, khara pongal, bisi bele bath, ragi mudde and soppu saaru, anna sambar (rice and sambar), chapati and tea/coffee will be served at the canteens.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

announced the allocation of Rs 21.29 crore for repair work at the 197 Indira Canteens and the construction of 188 new ones. In the Karnataka Budget, Rs 100 crore was allocated for the revitalisation of Indira Canteens.

Palike will be addressing the issue of pending bills, electricity and water supply at Indira Canteens as well.

"Regarding pending bills, the chief commissioner has tasked the special commissioner for finance and health to work out the issues. Payment to the contractors is being made based on indents. We have found there is a discrepancy between indent and supply at some Indira Canteens. We are also aware of the water and electricity issues in Indira Canteens. We are working towards ensuring electricity and safe drinking water supply at the canteens," the official added.

Indira Canteens will be revamped to provide restaurant-level customer satisfaction, good food at subsidised rates and all outlets shall be maintained as hygienic eating places.

Residents band together for Kalam statue in Jayanagar



Former corporator N Nagaraj and residents staging a protest on Sunday morning against the demolition of platform

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Abdul Kalam's statue? The BBMP authorities demolished the platform under construction at night. Why do they need to come at night to demolish the platform? There was a defunct milk booth where the platform was being constructed. The installation of the statue will not affect pedestrians walking on the footpath," said Girish Kumar S, a resident.

Lakshmi S, a homemaker, expressed concern and shock over the demolition of the platform. She said Dr APJ Abdul Kalam was a role model for youth. "The statue would have been an inspiration for the residents, especially students, if the BBMP authorities allowed the construction of the platform and installation of the statue," said Lakshmi.

Meanwhile, Satish, a resident, said residents decided to utilise the space, where a defunct milk booth existed for many years, for installing Dr Kalam's statue as some of the supporters of local MLA were trying to grab the space for commercial purposes.

"There were no statues of Dr Kalam in the city. We thought it would be apt to use the space for installing Dr Kalam's statue," said Satish.

Former corporator N Nagaraj told BM that the residents took the decision

to install Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's statue: "Arrangements were being made to unveil Dr Kalam's statue on January 1. Now, Dr Kalam's statue is missing and the platform under construction has been demolished.

Our protest will continue till Dr Kalam's statue is installed. I urge Jayanagar MLA CK Ramamurthy to stop anti-people policies and he has to honour and respect the public opinion. As of now, construction work is in progress for installing statues at three locations but I will not complain to the BBMP because I do not want to indulge in petty politics," said Nagaraj.

However, MLA Ramamurthy, when contacted, said that he has nothing to do with the demolition of the platform being constructed for the installation of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam's statue.

"I came to know about it on Sunday morning. I am of the opinion that some residents of nearby apartment complexes might have complained to the BBMP as the construction was taken up at night.

I have a lot of respect for Dr APJ Abdul Kalam but I will not agree with the people who want to install his statue on a footpath which is against the norms. I want people, who want to install statues at public places, to get permission from the BBMP," he said.

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I, K. C. Gyanana Gowda @ K C Gowda Residing at No. 8, 1st Cross, 1st Main, Near Gurusri Vidyakendra, Gangamahima Layout, Doddabidarakallu, Nagasandra Post, Bengaluru 560073 have changed my name to KARABASAPPA S/o. Chandappa Gyananagowda vide affidavit dated 15.12.2023 Sworn before notary: Chandrakala, Bangalore

I Aswini Kushal S/O, B.S. Ashwini Kumar R/o 91/4, 5th Cross, Right Side, Opp Anjan Theatre, Magadi Main Road, Bangalore North, Karnataka - 560023 have changed my name to Kushal Ashwini Kumar.

I Nikhil D V S/O, D Venkatadri Naidu R/o #503, 101, Surinani Siri Homes, 4th Main Road, Maruthi Nagar, Chennappa Layout Marathahalli have changed my name to Nikhil Chowdhary.

I Bhaviya A W/O, Vikas Kumar Jain R/o Prabhavathi Divine, g18, Ablock, Dr Rajkumar Road, nynaappana Halli Bangalore 560076 have changed my name to Bhaviya V Jain.

I, Rajalakshmi Rengan R/o A301, Sv Legacy Apartment, Hopefarm, Whitefield, Bengaluru-560066 have changed my minor son's name from Nithilan to Nithilan Raj.

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GOOD GUT FEELING

In the last decade, it has become increasingly clear that a gut full of friendly microbes (the microbiome) is vital for our good health.

It has also become clear that a healthy microbiome is one with a diverse population of microbes (bacteria, viruses, fungi). What we haven't known is why a diverse array of friendly bugs is important for keeping the harmful microbes (pathogens) at bay. But now we think we have found the answer.

Our latest study, published in Science, shows that the main reason a diverse microbiome is helpful for resisting pathogens is that the friendly microbes collectively consume the nutrients needed for a pathogen to grow in the gut.

In other words, a diverse microbiome blocks pathogen growth by using its nutrients – a phenomenon we call “nutrient blocking”. Understanding how nutrient blocking works is powerful because it allows us to predict which gut communities will be protective against a given pathogen.

Our research team started by conducting a large screen of 100 common strains of human gut bacteria. We tested the individual ability of these strains to restrict the growth of two bacterial pathogens, *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Salmonella enterica* serovar Typhimurium. These two species are a problem because many strains are becoming resistant to antibiotics.

Alone, the gut strains could not prevent pathogen growth. However, this was different when several of these species were pooled into larger com-

How diverse gut microbiomes give better protection against harmful bugs



Higher diversity communities tended to offer more protection against invading pathogens. But, certain species must be present for a community to be protective

munities. Higher diversity communities tended to offer more protection against invading pathogens, both in test-tube experiments and when tested in mice.

However, not all higher diversity communities tested restricted path-

ogen growth. Crucially, certain species must be present for a community to be protective.

We then went on to investigate the reason why. We compared the nutrients that could be consumed by each of the individual species with the nutrients consumed by the pathogens. We realised that certain gut species had a higher nutrient use overlap with the pathogens than

other species.

Still, individually, the nutrient use overlap of even these key species with the pathogens was not high enough to block pathogen growth. But when we considered which nutrients the community as a whole can use, we found that the communities with the highest degree of overlap with the pathogens provided the most protection.

Suggesting treatments

This finding is important as it provides a route for the design of beneficial, probiotic communities that aim to boost the microbiome's ability to resist colonisation by disease-causing pathogens.

We tested this idea by taking a set of 50 human gut species and predicting which combinations of species would be protective against a new pathogen: a drug-resistant *Escherichia coli*.

We selected the communities that were predicted to be poor at blocking the growth of this pathogenic *E. coli* isolate, and communities that were predicted to be good, and tested them against the new pathogen. In all cases, the nutrient blocking principle was able to successfully predict the ability of the community to block the growth of the pathogen.

Antibiotic treatment failure is becoming more common due to the spread of resistant pathogens. Alternative solutions that harness the body's natural ability to resist disease, such as by tinkering with the microbiome's composition, are becoming more attractive.

The gut microbiome is integral to our health, but it is very complex and therefore hard to understand. Our study provides a template for how one might rationally design probiotic communities to engineer microbiomes for better health.

(By Frances Spragge, Erik Bakkeren, University of Oxford, The Conversation)

MIND, BODY & HEART



All you need to know about...

5 causes of hair loss

Nutritional deficiencies

It could be possible that essential nutrients may be missing from your diets, such as iron, copper, zinc and proteins.

The deficiency of vitamin D is another cause of hair loss. In order to avoid this, make sure to get out and soak up some sun.

Hormonal imbalance

After the age of 30, women can experience hormonal imbalances, which can cause hair loss. This is usually caused by excessive dihydrotestosterone (DHT) conversion.

Even though estrogen is the main hormone that women produce, testosterone and other androgens, such as DHEA, also occur in the female body. As women reach a certain age, they may begin to convert these androgens to DHT.

Thyroid issues

If the thyroid gland, which is at the front of the neck, produces an excessive or insufficient amount of thyroid hormone, then the hair growth cycle may change.

However, if you do have a thyroid issue, you will notice other symptoms along with hair loss, such as weight gain or loss, sensitivity to cold or heat, and changes in heart rate.

Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)

Women with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) have a hormonal imbalance that creates higher levels of androgens than normal. This often causes hair to grow on the face and body while the hair on the head grows thinner. PCOS can also lead to ovulation problems, acne, and weight gain.

Extreme stress

Extreme stress can cause sudden hair loss, which could last for several months. Minimizing stress through exercise, meditation, yoga, and massages will reduce your chances of experiencing hair loss.

—Femina



MIRRORLIGHTS

Less social media use found to improve mental health, job satisfaction: Study

Reducing social media usage by 30 minutes improves mental health, job satisfaction while frequent users find it difficult to focus on their work, a study has found.

Researchers found that the less social media use led to the individuals feeling less overworked and lower levels of “fear of missing out” – popularly known as FOMO – on important happenings in their network when they aren't online.

Researchers at Ruhr University Bochum and the German Center for Mental Health, Germany, found that refraining from social media gave people more time to do their job and thus suffered less from divided attention.

“Our brains can't cope well with constant distraction from a task,” explained Julia Brailovskaia, author of the study published in the journal 'Behaviour and Informa-

tion Technology’.

“People who frequently stop what they're doing in order to catch up on their social media feed find it more difficult to focus on their work and they achieve poorer results,” said Brailovskaia.

For the study, the research team recruited 166 people, all of them employed and spending at least 35 minutes a day on non-work-related social media use.

They were divided into two groups – one did not change their social media habits, while the other reduced the time spent on social networks by 30 minutes a day for seven days.

The participants were asked to respond to questionnaires before the start of the experiment, the day after it began and one week later, providing information about their workload, job satisfaction,



commitment, mental health, stress levels, FOMO and behaviours indicating addictive social media use.

“Even after this short period of time, we found that the group that spent 30 minutes less a day on social media significantly improved their job satisfaction and mental

health,” said Brailovskaia.

The effects lasted for at least a week after the end of the experiment and in some cases even improved in the period, the researchers said.

“We suspect that people tend to use social networks to generate positive emotions that they're missing in their everyday working lives, especially when they are feeling overworked,” said Brailovskaia.

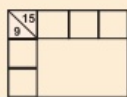
“In addition, some platforms such as LinkedIn also offer the opportunity to look for new jobs if you're unhappy with your current role,” she said.

The researchers said that while in the short-term, escaping from reality into the world of social networks may indeed improve one's mood, in the long-term, such habits can lead to addictive behaviour that has the opposite effect.

— PTI

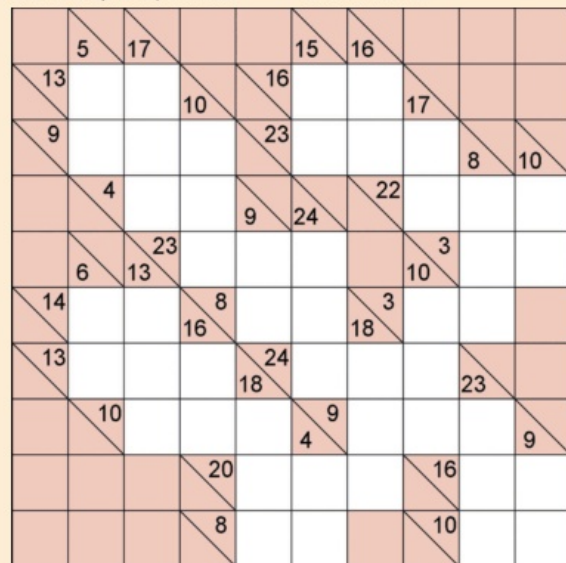
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

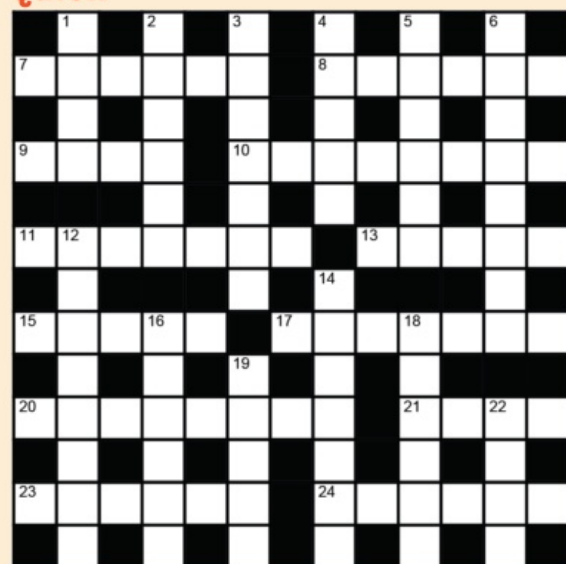


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

- 7 Japanese number puzzle (6)
- 8 Words of songs (6)
- 9 Hurtful remark (4)
- 10 A leading light (8)
- 11 Impute or accredit; attribute (7)
- 13 Great danger (5)
- 15 Blink of an eye (5)
- 17 Investigating (7)
- 20 Particular (8)
- 21 Titled lady (4)
- 23 Capital of Turkey (6)
- 24 Verse (6)

DOWN

- 1 Brass instrument (4)
- 2 Bleak, cheerless or dejected (US) (6)
- 3 Cradlesong (7)
- 4 Small airship (5)
- 5 European super-power (6)
- 6 Stinging arachnid (8)
- 12 ___ rope : slimmer's tool? (8)
- 14 Upper arm muscles (7)
- 16 Of the countenance (6)
- 18 Plan of spending (6)
- 19 Entrails, etc (5)
- 22 Her basilica is located in Shivajinagar (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: Q EQUALS G
PSKUJWAZAQ WJUPWZ PII
NJTSGHWZ VAWL WLU JUKU-
JUOHU POS WLU ZUJATGZOUZ
SGU WT ZPHJPFUOWZ.



Linemaro

Even if there wasn't any gravity on earth, I'd still fall for you



Mindchow

'I do my best', is about all the philosophy of living that one needs



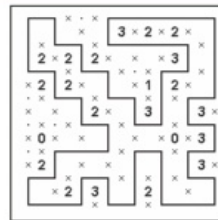
Joke of the day

You know that section in forms where you have to define your relationship with other persons in the household? I put "Going through a bad patch ... " "PS. we hope to resolve the situation shortly"

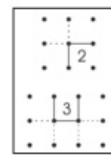
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

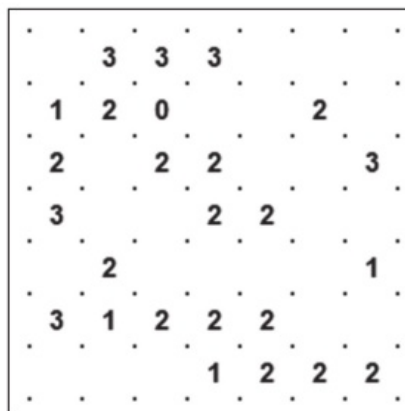


(Fig B) Not Allowed

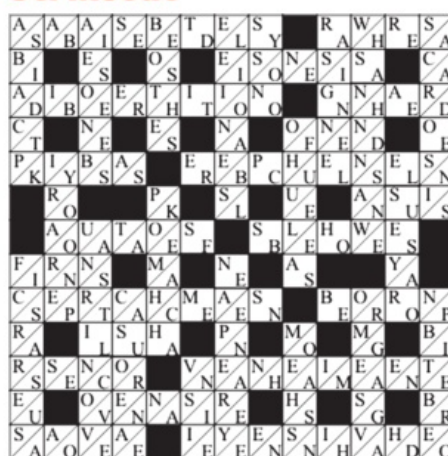
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



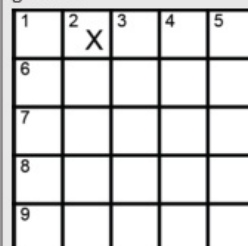
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

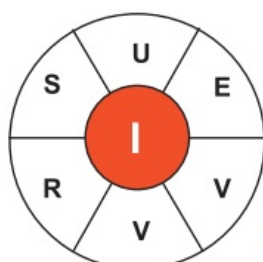
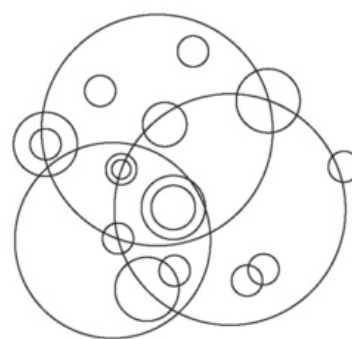
- 1 Axe I; 6 Aimed;
- 7 U lent; 8 Gees I;
- 9 Saree

DOWN

- 1 Mause; 2 Axe in;
- 3 Slide; 4 Leg ie;
- 5 A tree

Mensapuzzle

How many different size circles appear below?



Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

02 Average; 03 Good; 04 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy

□ □ □ □ □ = 14

2 2 5 9

Medium

□ □ □ □ □ = 9

2 4 7 8

Hard

□ □ □ □ □ = 24

2 4 6 2

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Woman is standing straighter. 2. Leg is moved. 3. Picture on wall is smaller. 4. Collar is missing. 5. Hat is different. 6. Purse is longer.

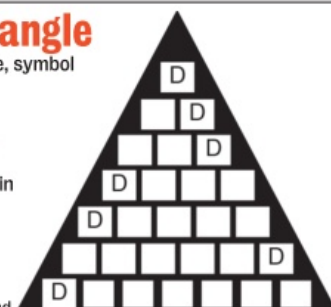
Riddler

I alone am an intricate game I and a labyrinth are one and the same Add a letter and then I become Astonished, amused, and perplexed to some What am I?

Alpha triangle

- 1 Hydrogen isotope, symbol
- 2 Editor, abbr.
- 3 Gave dinner
- 4 Dexterous
- 5 A style of glazed earthenware
- 6 Formed grooves in
- 7 Fail to pay up

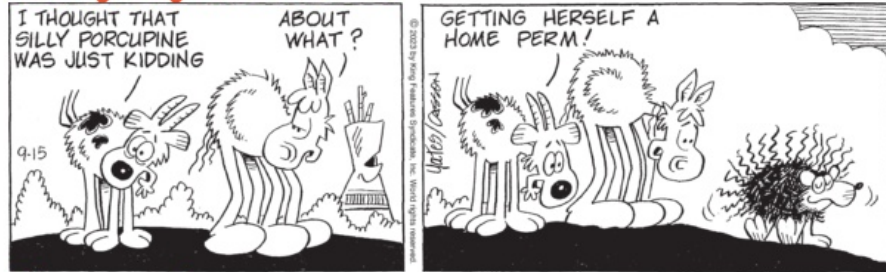
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be



made at each step answering to the clue given.

COMICS

Redeye by Mel Casson



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20

Today, you may achieve a balance between your earnings and expenses, boosting your bank balance. You might perform well in your job, and your boss could assign you new responsibilities for potential promotions. The recovery of previously stuck money is likely, and you may gain control over opponents and hidden enemies.



Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

Enhanced communication skills benefit your professional front. Politeness towards those around you speeds up projects, and love birds may strengthen their relationship through open communication.



Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22

Blessings from elders boost your confidence, allowing you to follow your intuition at work. Intuitive decisions may lead to financial gains, and a visit to a religious place with family is likely. Control arrogance for a harmonious domestic life.



Taurus Apr 21 - May 20

Today, you may feel dull due to sleeplessness, impacting your working efficiency and scattering your focus on goals. Despite this, blessings from elders in the late evening may help you recognise mistakes and plan for the coming day. Take care of your parents' health.



Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23

Feelings of dullness and unhappiness may prevail. Avoid harsh conversations with friends and family. Your hard work may not receive proper recognition, requiring patience when making important decisions.



Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20

Today may not be favourable, with feelings of dullness and unhappiness. Mysterious fears may unsettle you, and a lack of confidence can affect your work. Avoid rushing in driving and risky adventure tours.



Gemini May 21 - Jun 21

Today, the moon's blessing brings love into your personal life, and singles may find a suitable match. Professional life may see improvements, with support from friends and subordinate staff.



Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22

Blessed by the moon, new partnerships may bring benefits. High energy levels, hard work, and enthusiasm may result in financial gains. Self-respect protects you from negative influences.



Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

Expect instant gains in your business, boosting your confidence and bank balance. Avoid stress in domestic life, and anticipate momentum in business and work. Increased prestige and potential overseas trips may be on the horizon.



Cancer Jun 22 - July 23

Cooperation from subordinate staff may help complete postponed projects. Participation in a social event may enhance your network, benefiting both work and social life. Disputes with friends may be resolved, and students are advised to avoid carelessness.



Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22

New sources of income may open up, and past investments may yield profits, boosting your bank balance. Connections with a social organisation increase your network. Love birds may enjoy happy moments, and singles may find a soul mate.



Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

In a hurry today, drive safely. Blessings from elders may help you overcome challenges, and patience in handling multiple tasks could lead to success. Positive results are expected in new partnerships, and love birds may enjoy happy moments. Job seekers may find suitable opportunities.



KIDZONE



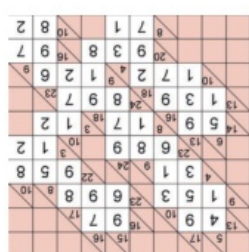
Rishika P,
13 Years,
Indiranagar
Cambridge
School



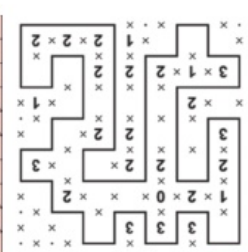
Akash N,
13 Years,
Indiranagar
Cambridge
School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

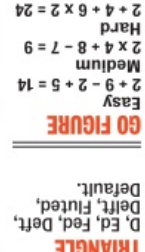
SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



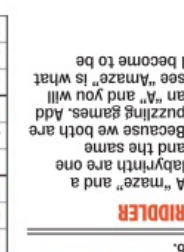
ALPHA



LOOP



SUDOKU



MENSA PUZZLE



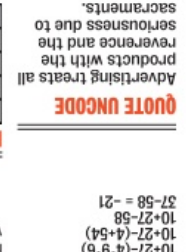
QUICK



STRIKE OUT



BULLS' EYE



QUOTE UNCODE



Greatest b'day wish

Actor Genelia Deshmukh on Sunday penned an adorable birthday wish for her husband and actor Riteish Deshmukh.

Taking to Instagram, Genelia shared a monochrome picture with her husband which she captioned, "If someone had to ask me 'Who Riteish Deshmukh is???' -I would just say 'the greatest man in the entire universe and that greatest man is all mine. Happy Birthday Navra.'"

In the picture, the couple could be seen flaunting their cute smiles. Riteish and Genelia are among the cutest Bollywood couples. Riteish and Genelia made their Bollywood debuts with the 2003 film 'Tujhe Meri Kasam'. They fell in love on the sets of the film and have been together for close to two decades.

Riteish and Genelia tied the knot on February 3, 2012. They are dotting parents to two kids, Rahyl and Riaan.

On the work front, Riteish will be seen in the upcoming '100%' and in an upcoming horror comedy film 'Kakuda' alongside Sonakshi Sinha and Saqib Saleem. He will also be seen in the fifth instalment of his hit comedy franchise 'Housefull'. **-ANI**

A few names

Alia gets candid talking about daughter Raha

Celebrity couple Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt are among the most loved B-town couples. Both of them are often seen talking about their daughter Raha on various occasions.

On Sunday, Alia took to her Instagram and conducted an 'Ask me Anything' session on her stories.

During the session, a user asked the 'Raazi' actor "Raha's nick name?" to which she replied, "Rahu, Rara, Lollipop (to name a few)."

Another user asked Alia, does she feels separation anxiety for Raha? To which he responded, "It's never easy leaving her. But I guess that'll take a while to change. Knowing she's with family even when I'm away makes me feel less guilty somehow."

Ranbir and Alia tied the knot on April 14, 2022, and the couple welcomed their first child, a baby girl, named Raha in November 2022.

Earlier in November, the duo celebrated their daughter's first birthday with a bash at their residence in Mumbai.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Alia will be next seen in director Vasan Bala's next 'Jigra'.

Apart from that, she also has 'Jee Le Zaraa' in her kitty. Helmed by Farhan Akhtar the film also stars Katrina Kaif and Priyanka Chopra in the lead roles. **-ANI**



From Mexico



Good news for those who enjoyed the film Badava Rascal that was released in 2021. Shankar Guru, who handled the megaphone and Dhananjay aka Daali Dhananjay, who played the lead in the film, are coming together again. The title of their upcoming movie is Anna from Mexico. The movie's muhurat ceremony was held on Friday.

Mrunal Hebbalkar, Daali Dhananjay and director Shankar Guru's friend wished the cast and crew all the best. The film is expected to go on floors from January at multiple locations in Karnataka and also in Mexico. Dhananjay is busy with the movies Pushpa-2 and Zebra and he is gearing up to shoot for the movie Uttarakanda, directed by Rohit Padaki. Anna from Mexico will be Shankar Guru's second film as a director after Badava Rascal.

Anna from Mexico will be a action movie for family audiences. It is being bankrolled by Sathya Rayala under the Rayala Studios banner in association with Ira Films.

True or false



Actor Nirup Bhandari known for movies Rangitaranga, Rajaratha, Vikrant Rona, has agreed to act in a yet-to-be titled movie to be helmed by debutant director Sachin Vaali.

"The theme of the story revolves around truth and lies. I liked the story; it has all the elements needed for a complete family entertainer. The first half is humorous and the second half deals with a social issue. It's part courtroom drama. The character excited me, it's something I haven't played before. Though this is Sachin's first film, he has come prepared. The technical team is also great," said Nirup.

Director Sachin told BM that he worked as associate director for a few Kannada movies.

"The movie is aimed at all types of audiences. The movie is scheduled to go on floors next month," said Sachin Vaali.

The team is now busy selecting the remaining cast. It is to be bankrolled by Ankit Sonigara under the Anket Cinemas banner Prashant Mulage.

Varun suffers leg injury



Actor Varun Dhawan on Sunday said he suffered an injury in his left leg after he hit his shin with an iron rod.

The 36-year-old actor shared the update on his Instagram Stories.

"Swollen shin banged it into an iron rod," Varun captioned the picture of his injured leg.

He is currently shooting for Tamil director Kalees'

film, which is produced by Atlee and his wife Priya Mohan's banner A For Apple Studios.

Co-produced by Murad Khetani, the currently untitled project also stars Wamiqa Gabbi.

Varun didn't specify whether he sustained the injury on the movie set.

The actor previously hurt his right leg while shooting the film in September.

Off on a vacay



Celebrity couple Kareena Kapoor Khan and Saif Ali Khan have jetted off for a vacation with their kids Jeh and Taimur ahead of Christmas.

On Sunday, Kareena and Saif along with the kids were papped at the Mumbai airport jetting off for a family vacation.

Several pictures of the family went viral on social media.

In the pictures, Kareena is seen donning a red cut-sleeve puff jacket over a white shirt and blue denims. She tied her hair into a ponytail and completed her look with black shades.

Saif, on the other hand, looked

dapper in a blue t-shirt paired with blue denims. He completed his look with a green cut-sleeve puff jacket and a red cap.

Talking about the kids, Jeh and Taimur were seen twinning in blue cut-sleeve puff jackets.

Both of them were seen walking hand-in-hand at the airport.

Kareena and Saif tied the knot on October 16, 2012. In 2016, the two became parents to son Taimur and in



February 2021 they welcomed Jeh. Saif was married to Amrita Singh before Kareena and they have two children together, Sara Ali Khan and Ibrahim Ali Khan.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Kareena will be next seen in 'The Crew' alongside Kriti Sanon, Tabu and Diljit Dosanjh.

Apart from that, she also has Rohit Shetty's 'Singham Again' which also stars Ajay Devgn, Deepika Padukone, Akshay Kumar, Ranveer Singh and Tiger Shroff in pivotal roles.

Saif, on the other hand, will be next seen in the Pan-India film 'Devara' alongside Jr NTR and Janhvi Kapoor. **-ANI**